

REMARKS

The interview accorded to Applicants' attorney by the Examiner is gratefully acknowledged.

Claims 1 to 6 are in the application and, by amendment hereof, claim 1 is revised to reflect the changes which the Examiner agreed at the interview would enable claim 1 and, via dependency, the other claims in the application, to distinguish over the patents to Du Ross, et al. and Brzezicki, et al. as teachings of the claimed invention.

For this reason, therefore, it is submitted that the claims now in the application define patentable subject matter and should be allowed. The Examiner is accordingly requested to favorably consider this Preliminary Amendment and to allow the application.

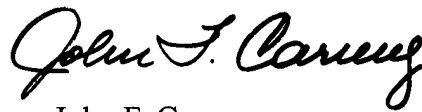
Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**".

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/023,416

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures: Version With Markings To Show Changes Made
CPA
Petition for Extension of Time

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A fluid control apparatus comprising a plurality of lines, each line having a fluid controller, an inlet on-off device and an outlet on-off device arranged respectively at an inlet side and an outlet side of each of the fluid [controller] controllers, each of the on-off devices comprising one valve or a plurality of valves, with the adjacent valves [connected] interconnecting [to] each other without using tubing,

each of the on-off devices being of the type selected from the group including a 2-type on-off device having a two-port valve, a 2-3-type on-off device having a two-port valve and a three-port valve, a 2-3-3-type on-off device having a two-port valve and two three-port valves, a 3-3-type on-off device having two three-port valves, and a 3-3-3-type on-off device having three three-port valves,

main bodies of two-port valves of all types of on-off devices being identical in configuration and each having an inlet port and an outlet port in a bottom face thereof, and main bodies of three-port valves of all types of on-off devices being identical in configuration and each being formed in a bottom face thereof with an inlet port, an outlet port always in communication with the inlet port, and an inlet-outlet subopening having a port separate from said inlet port and said outlet port;

each port of said two-port valves and said three-port valves being arranged in a row
disposed in a common plane along said each line; and

valve mounts mounting said valve main bodies including a plurality of joint members
having upper surfaces disposed in substantial coplanar relation, said joint members containing
internal passages communicating with ports of said valves and operatively [connecting]
interconnecting said valves and said fluid controllers in selected fluid flow relation.